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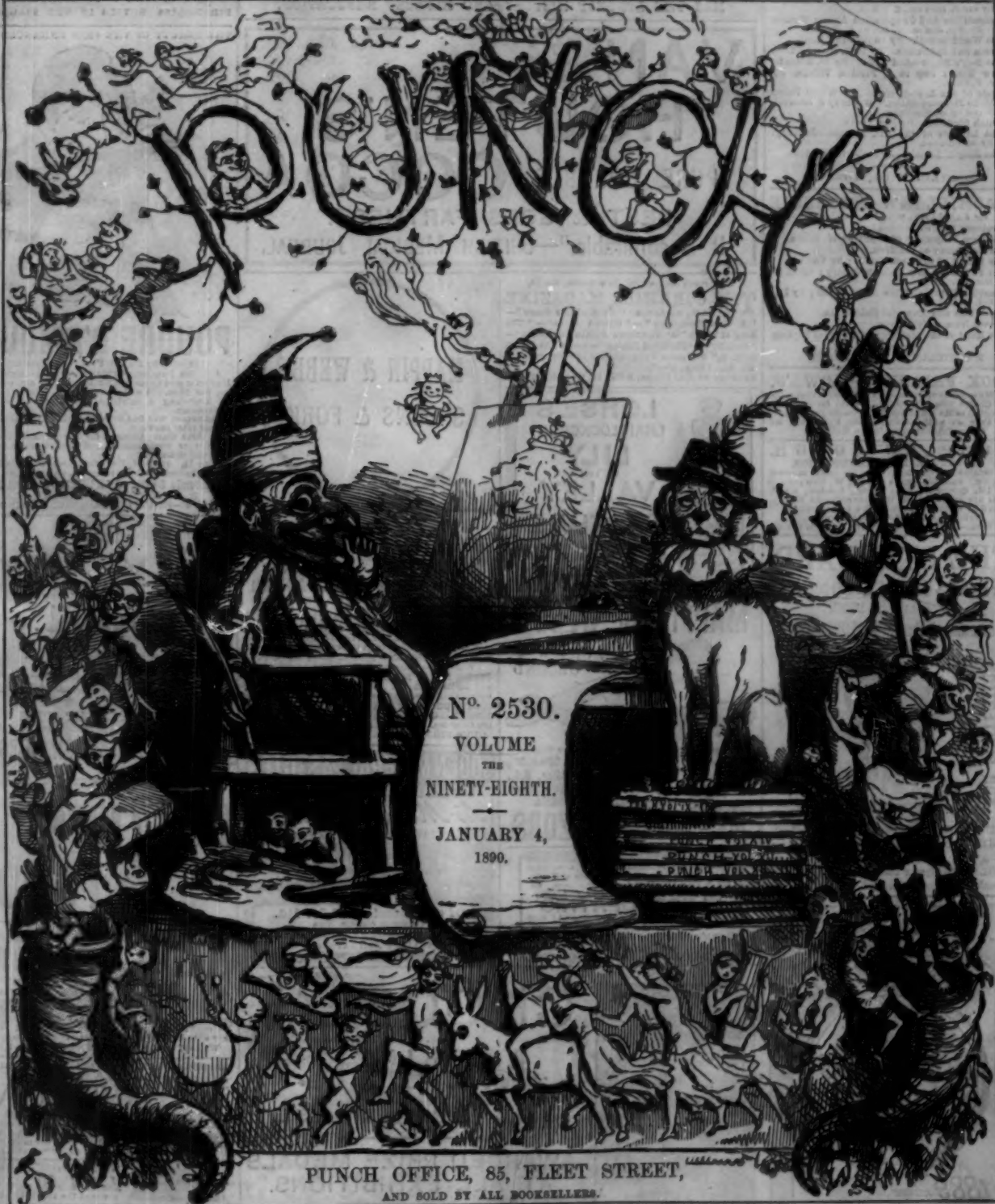

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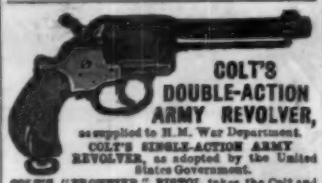

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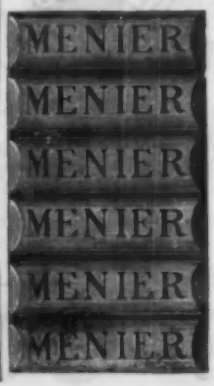

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JOURNAL OF A ROLLING STONE.

FOURTH ENTRY.

HAVE for a considerable time past been "eating dinners," preparatory to being "called" to the Bar. Understand now what people mean when they talk of a "*Digest* of the Law."

Find myself (on dining for the first time this Term) in a mess with a highly-intelligent native of India, another man up from Oxford, and an African law-student. Latter black and curly, but good-natured. Says there is a great demand for English-made barristers on the Gambia, and he's going to supply the demand.

Have wild and momentary idea of going to the Gambia myself.

"Why," I ask this enterprising negro, "why don't English barristers—white ones, I mean—go and practise there?" Feel that reference to colour is not felicitous; still, difficult to express the idea otherwise.

African doesn't mind. Shows all his teeth in a broad grin, and says, "Inglis men die, die like flies, on the Gambia."

Curious to see the Hindoo law-student looking contemptuously at African ditto. Hindoo a shrewd fellow. Talks English perfectly. Rather given to gesticulate. Waves his arms, and incidentally knocks over a bottle of the claret—at twelve shillings a dozen—which the Inn kindly supplies to wash down the mutton and baked potatoes at our two-shilling meal. Hindoo laughs. Tells me, confidentially, that he has practised as a "Vakeel" (whatever that is) in some small country town in Bengal. Why has he come over here? Oh, to be called. Will get more work and more pay, when a full-fledged barrister. Gather that there are rival "Vakeels" in Bengal whom he wants to cut out. He intends "cutting out"—to India—directly he *is* called.

Oxford man tells me in a whisper that "he believes he's a Baboo." Indeed! Don't feel much wiser for the information.

African getting jealous of Baboo's fluent talk. Rather a sportive negro, it appears. Says he goes to theatre nearly every night. Has a regular and rather festive programme for each day.

"Lecture, morning," he says; "afternoon, walk in Park, sometimes ride. Night, theatre or music-hall." He grins like an amiable gargoyle. In his own country African law-student must be quite a lady-killer—a sort of Gambia masher.

Incidentally mention to Hindoo difficulty of law of Real Property, especially "Rule in SHELLEY'S Case."

It seems Hindoo understands matter perfectly. Begins to explain the "Rule in SHELLEY'S Case." Does it by aid of two salt-cellars (to represent the parties) and a few knives (to represent collateral relatives).

African masher more jealous. Laughs at Baboo's explanation. He and Baboo exchange glances of hatred. African, who is carving, brandishes knife. Is he going to plunge it into heart of Baboo just as he's got through his explanation? Looks like it, as the shilling claret seems to have got into place where we may suppose African's brain to be. However, dinner ends without a catastrophe.

After attending the usual amount of legal lectures, the "Final" Exam. approaches.

Get through the papers pretty well. Thank goodness, no question asked so far about that "Rule in SHELLEY'S Case," which is my "*Pons Asinorum!*" It's a "rule" to which I take great exception.

There's a "*Vivâ Voce*" to come, however. Hate *vivâ voce*. Two examiners sit at end of Hall—students called up in batches of half-a-dozen at a time. Very nervous work. Find, when my turn comes, that the intelligent Baboo is in the same lot! Appears to like the position. From his manner I should judge that he'd been doing nothing all his life but being examined by fifties in a cave, like this.

Examiner who tackles me has an eye-glass.

"Now, Mr. JOYNSON," he remarks, putting it up to survey me better, "if you were a trustee, &c., &c., *what would you do?*"

Flattered at the supposition. Answer in a way which seems to partly satisfy Examiner, who passes on to next man with a new question. In a minute or two my turn comes round again.

"Now, Mr. JOYNSON," Examiner again observes cheerfully, "let me ask you quite an elementary question in Real Property. Just give me a brief, a very brief, explanation of what you understand by the Rule in SHELLEY'S Case!"

But I don't understand anything by it! It's a piece of hopeless legal gibberish to me. I stammer out some attempt at an answer, and see Baboo looking at me with a pitying, almost reproachful, glance. "Didn't I," he seems to say, "explain it all to you once at dinner? Do you really mean to say that you've forgotten the way in which I arranged the salt-cellars and the table-knives, and how I turned the whole case inside out for your benefit?"

I admit the offence. Examiner seems surprised at my ignorance—informs me that "it's as easy as A.B.C." It may be—to him and the Baboo.

Baboo, being asked the same question, at once explains the whole matter, this time without the aid of the salt-cellars and cutlery.

A few days later go to look at result of examination. Result, for me—a Plough!

Walking away dejectedly—("homeward the Plough-man wends his legal way"—as GRAY sympathetically put it)—meet African law-student, who grins insanely. *He* doesn't sympathise in my defeat. Shows his fine set of ivories and says:—

"Me failed too. Me go back Gambia. You come back with me!"

Tell him I'm not "called" yet: certainly not called to Gambia.

"Then come to Alhambra!" he suggests, as a sort of alternative to a visit to the tropics.

African student evidently still a masher. Decline his invitation with thanks. Wouldn't be seen with him at a theatre for worlds! Depressed. Don't even look in at Gaiety Bar. No Gaiety for *me*—and no "Bar" either, it seems.

SOME NEW YEAR'S PROBLEMS.

THE BUSY (J.) B.

(*Not by Dr. Watts.*)

How doth the busy Jerry Builder
Improve his shining hoard,
And gather money, basely earned,
From every opening Board!

How skilfully he scamps his "shells"!
How deftly spreads his sludge!
And labours to defend his sells
By special-pleading fudge!

With what serene, well-practised skill,
He "squares" Surveyors too!
For Jobbery finds some baseness still
For venal hands to do.

Whether for work or healthful play
His buildings will not last.
May he be called some day, some day,
To strict account at last!

PARLIAMENTARY INTELLIGENCE.—According to the announcement in the *Gazette*, the SPEAKER will take the Chair in the House of Commons on Tuesday, the 11th of February, when the new Session opens. But, as a matter of fact, *The Speaker* will be on the book-stalls on Saturday next, the 4th of January, entering upon what promises to be a useful and prolonged Session. Thereafter *The Speaker* will take the book-stall once a week regularly, there being Saturday sittings throughout the year. *The Speaker* will, of course, be on the side of Law and "Order! Order!"

A BALLAD OF EVIL SPEED.

A Cool Collation of Several Bards.

I WOULD I had not met you, Sweet,
I wish you had been far away
From where, in Upper Wimpole Street,
We two foregather'd yesterday.
Somewhere in that unlovely street
Summer's lost beauty, hid away,
Woke at the music of your feet,
And sought the little girl in grey.
Around your head the sunbeams play—
Home to the depths of your deep eyes
Soft shadows of the woodland stray,
Then sparkle with a quick surprise,
As when the branch-entangled skies
Shake from the depths of woodland stream,
Awhile in laughing circles gleam,
Then spread to heaven's peace again.
Amber and gold, and feathery grey,
You suited well the Autumn day,
The muffled sun, the misty air,
The weather like a sleepy pear.
And yet I wish that you had been
Afar, beside the sounding main,
Or swaying daintily the rein
Of mettled courser on the green,
So I had passed, and passed unseen.

For I arose, from dreams of thee,
So late that morn, my matin tea
Was cold as mutton two days cooked;
As in the looking-glass I looked,
Methought the razor need not wreak
Its wonted vengeance on my cheek,
Nor clear the shadow from my chin
Till to the City I had been.
Thus, horrid with a nascent beard,
By chance through Wimpole Street I steered,
Trusting therein to shun contempt
Of who abhor a man unkempt.
For like a mother-bird, who 's caught
The cant of modern woman's thought,
My restless tie refused to sit,
And restless fingers vainly sought
To soothe the silkworm's stubborn toil.
But only did its candour soil,
And suffered none the less from it.
For all my neck, and head no less,
Owned to a vague unquietness,
As when the vagrant spiderlet
Has spread at large her filmy net
To catch the moonbeams, wavering white,
At the front gate on Autumn night.

Then suddenly the sombre way
Rock'd like the darkness struck by day,
The endless houses reel'd from sight,
And all romance and all delight
Came thronging in a glorious crowd.
So, when the drums are beating loud,
The mob comes sweeping down the Mall,
Far heralding the bear-skins tall.
Glorious in golden clothing comes
The great drum-major with his drums
And sun-smit brass of trumpets; then
The scarlet wall of marching men,
Midmost of which great Mavors sets
The colours girt with bayonets.
Yes, there were you—and there was I,
Unshaved, and with erratic tie,
And for that once I yearn'd to shun
My social system's central sun.
How could a sloven slave express
The frank, the manly tenderness
That wraps you round from common thought,
And does not ask that you should know
The love that consecrates you so.
No; furtive, awkward, restless, cold,
I basely seemed to set at naught
That sudden bliss, undreamt, unsought.
What must she think, my girl of gold?
I dare not ask; and baffled wit
Droops—till sweet hopes begin to flit—
Like butterflies that brave the cold—
Perhaps she didn't notice it.

STUDIES IN REPARTEE.

She. "HOW SILENT YOU ARE! WHAT ARE YOU THINKING OF?"
He. "*NOTHING!*" *She.* "EGOTIST!"

"JUST TO OBLIGE BENSON."

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—It was not a very happy thought to send me to the Globe Theatre at this festive season of the year to witness the representation of a piece, called by the management, for some reason or other, "a *faërie* comedy." Now, I like a Burlesque, and I am fond of a Pantomime, but a mixture of blank verse and tom-foolery is rather too much for me, especially when that mixture is not redeemed by a plot of any interest. Nothing can be more absurd than the story (save the mark!) told in this particularly uninteresting play. It appears that a "Duke!" of Athens married the Queen of the Amazons, and during the nuptial rejoicings ordered the daughter of one of his subjects to "die the death" unless she transferred her affections from her own true love to a gentleman of her father's choice. The gentleman of her father's choice was beloved in his turn by a school friend of his would-not-be betrothed, and the play which lasted from eight until nearly midnight, was devoted to setting this simple (in more senses than one) *imbroglio* right. By a clumsy device, *Oberon* King of the Fairies bewitched the two pairs of lovers during their sleep in a wood, so that one lady had two admirers and the other none. All that was needed to bring the piece to a conclusion was to have another exercise of magic when the couples paired off, of course, in a manner calculated to give satisfaction to their friends and relations. This was the entire plot. There was now and again some attempts to turn amateur theatricals into feeble ridicule by the introduction of a party of village histrions, who were allowed to "clown" to their heart's content; and *voilà tout!*

The mounting is excellent. Nothing better than "a Wood near Athens," painted by Mr. HEMSLEY, has been seen since Professor HERKOMER startled the world with his representation of village life at Bushey. The music, too (chiefly from the works of MENDELSSOHN), is always charming, and frequently appropriate. Moreover, Mr. BENSON, no doubt feeling that his author required every possible support, has introduced a number of pretty dances, executed by comely maidens of ages varying from seven to (say) seven-and-twenty.

Of course, such a play required very ordinary acting. Mr. BENSON was, on the whole, a gentlemanly *Lysander*, Mr. OTHO STUART a dignified *Oberon*, and Mr. STEPHEN PHILLIPS quite the best of the village histrions. Miss GRACE GERALDINE was also fanciful in the *rôle* of a sort of gnome. But, allowing for the music, and the scenery, and the acting, the piece itself was unquestionably dull. And now, having given you my unbiassed opinion, I beg to sign myself,

YOUR UNPREJUDICED CONTRIBUTOR.

P.S.—I am told that the author of *A Midsummer's Dream* wrote a number of other plays of considerable merit. This I challenge, the more especially as those who swear by Mr. WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE candidly admit that his name is a deterrent rather than an attraction on a play-bill.

1890 ALMANACK FOR FUNNY DOGS.—Evidently "Whitty Curs' Almanack."

MR. PUNCH'S MORAL MUSIC-HALL DRAMAS.

No. II.—JOE, THE JAM-EATER.

A Musical Spectacular and Sensational Interlude. (Dedicated respectfully to Mr. McDougall and the L. C. C.)

THE Music-hall Dramatist, like SHAKESPEARE, has a right to take his material from any source that may seem good to him. *Mr. Punch*, therefore, makes no secret of the fact, that he has based the following piece upon the well-known poem of "*The Purloiner*," by the Sisters JANE and ANN TAYLOR, who were *not*, as might be too hastily concluded, "Song and Dance Duettists," but two estimable ladies, who composed "cautionary" verses for the young, and whose works are a perfect mine of wealth for Moral Dramatists. In this dramatic version the Author has tried to infuse something of the old Greek sense of an overruling destiny, without detriment to prevailing ideas of moral responsibility. Those who have the misfortune to be born with a propensity for illicit jam, may learn from our Drama the terrible results of failing to overcome it early in life.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Jam-loving Joe. By that renowned Melodramatic Serio-Comic, Miss CONNIE CURDLER.

Joe's Mother (*the very part for* MRS. BANCROFT *if she can only be induced to make her re-appearance*).

John, a Gardener. By the great Pink-eyed Unmusical Zulu.

Jim-Jam, the Fermentation Fiend. By Mr. BEERBOHM TREE (*who has kindly consented to undertake the part*).

Chorus of Plum and Pear Gatherers, from the Savoy (*by kind permission of* Mr. D'OYLY CARTE).

SCENE.—*The Store-room at sunset, with view of exterior of Jam Cupboard, and orchard in distance.*

Enter JOE.

"As JOE was at play, Near the cupboard one day, When he thought no one saw him but himself."—*Vide Poem.*

Joe (*dreamily*). 'Tis passing strange that I so partial am
To playing in the neighbourhood of Jam!

[*Here* Miss CURDLER *will introduce her great humorous Satirical Medley, illustrative of the Sports of Childhood, and entitled, "Some Little Gymes we all of us 'ave Plied;" after which, Enter* JOE'S *Mother, followed by* JOHN *and the Chorus, with baskets, ladders, &c., for gathering fruit.*

"His Mother and JOHN, To the garden had gone, To gather ripe pears and ripe plums."—*Poem.*

Joe's Mother (*with forced cheerfulness*)—
Let 's hope, my friends, to find our pears and plums,
Unharmed by wopses, and untouched by wums.

[*Chorus signify assent in the usual manner by holding up the right hand.*

Solo—JOHN.

Fruit when gathered ripe, is wholesome—
Otherwise if eaten green.
Once I knew a boy who stole some—
[*With a glance at* JOE, *who turns aside to conceal his confusion.*
His internal pangs were keen!

Chorus (*virtuously*). 'Tis the doom of all who 're mean,
Their internal pangs are keen!

Joe's Mother (*aside*). By what misgivings is a mother tortured!
I'll keep my eye on JOSEPH in the orchard.
[*She invites him with a gesture to follow.*

Joe (*earnestly*). Nay, Mother, here I'll stay till you have done.
Temptation it is ever best to shun!

Joe's M. So laudable his wish, I would not cross it—
(*Mysteriously.*) He knows not there are jam-pots in yon closet!

Chorus. Away we go tripping,
From boughs to be stripping
Each pear, plum, and pippin
Pomona supplies!
When homeward we've brought 'em,
Those products of Autumn,
We'll carefully sort 'em
(*One of our old Music-hall rhymes*),
According to size! [*Repeat as they caper out.*

[JOE'S Mother, *after one fond, lingering look behind, follows; the voices are heard more and more faintly in the distance. Stage darkens; the last ray of sunset illumines key of jam-cupboard door.*

Joe. At last I am alone! Suppose I tried
That cupboard—just to see what 's kept inside?
[*Seems drawn towards it by some fatal fascination.*
There *might* be Guava jelly, and a plummy cake,
For such a prize I'd laugh to scorn a stomach-ache!
[*Laughs a stomach-ache to scorn.*
And yet (*hesitating*) who knows?—a pill? . . perchance—
a powder!
(*Desperately*). What then? To scorn I'll laugh them—even louder!

[*Fetches chair and unlocks cupboard. Doors fall open with loud clang, revealing Interior of Jam Closet* (*painted by* HAWES CRAVEN). JOE *mounts chair to explore shelves. Vide poem, "How sorry I am, He ate raspberry jam, And currants that stood on the shelf!"*

Joe (*speaking with mouth full, and back to audience*). 'Tis raspberry—of all the jams my favourite;
I'll clear the pot, whate'er I have to pay for it!
And finish up with currants from this shelf . . .
Who 'll ever see me?

The Demon of the Jam Closet (*rising slowly from an immense pot of preserves*). None—except Myself!

[*The cupboard is lit up by an infernal glare* (*courteously lent by the Lyceum Management from "Faust" properties*); *weird music;* JOE *turns slowly and confronts the* Demon *with awestruck eyes;* N.B.—*Great opportunity for powerful acting here.*

The Demon (*with a bland sneer*). Pray don't mind *me*—I will await your leisure.

Joe (*automatically*). Of your acquaintance, Sir, I've not the pleasure.
Who *are* you? Wherefore have you intervened?

The Demon (*quietly*). My name is "Jim-Jam"; occupation—fiend.

Joe (*cowering limply on his chair*). O Mr. Fiend, I *know* it's very wrong of me!

Demon (*politely*). Don't mention it—but please to come "along of" me?

Joe (*imploringly*). Do let me off this once,—ha! you're relenting,
You smile——

Demon (*grimly*). 'Tis nothing but my jam fermenting!
[*Catches* JOE'S *ankle, and assists him to descend.*

Joe. You'll drive me mad!

Demon (*carelessly*). I *may*—before I've done with you!

Joe. What do you want?

Demon (*darkly*). To have a little fun with you!
Of fiendish humour now I'll give a specimen.

[*Chases him round and round Stage, and proceeds to smear him hideously with jam.*

Joe (*piteously*). Oh, don't! I feel *so* sticky. *What* a mess I'm in!

Demon (*with affected sympathy*). That *is* the worst of jam—it's apt to stain you.

[*To* JOE, *as he frantically endeavours to remove the traces of his crime.*
I see you're busy—so I'll not detain you!

[*Vanishes down star-trap with a diabolical laugh. Cupboard-doors close with a clang; all lights down.* JOE *stands gazing blankly for some moments, and then drags himself off Stage. His Mother and* JOHN, *with Pear- and Plum-gatherers bearing laden baskets, appear at doors at back of Scene, in faint light of torches.*

Re-enter Joe (*bearing a candle and wringing his hands*). Out, jammed spot! What—will these hands *never* be clean? Here's the smell of the raspberry jam still! All the powders of Gregory cannot unsweeten this little hand. . . . (*Moaning.*) Oh, oh, oh!

[*This passage has been accused of bearing too close a resemblance to one in a popular Stage Play; if so, the coincidence is purely accidental, as the Dramatist is not in the habit of reading such profane literature.*

Joe's Mother. Ah! what an icy dread my heart benumbs!
See—stains on all his fingers, *and* his thumbs!

"What JOE was about, His Mother found out, When she look'd at his fingers and thumbs."—*Poem again.*

Nay, JOSEPH—'tis your mother . . . speak to her!

Joe (*tonelessly, as before*). Lady, I know you not (*touches lower part of waistcoat*); but, prithee, undo this button. I think I have jam in all my veins, and I would fain sleep. When I am gone, lay me in a plain white jelly-pot, with a parchment cover, and on the

label write——but come nearer, I have a secret for your ear alone . . . there are strange things in some cupboards! Demons should keep in the dust-bin. (*With a ghastly smile.*) I know not what ails me, but I am not feeling at all well.

[JOE's Mother *stands a few steps from him, with her hands twisted in her hair, and stares at him in speechless terror.*

Joe (*to the Chorus*). I would shake hands with you all, were not my fingers so sticky. We eat marmalade, but we know not what it is made of. Hush! if JIM-JAM comes again, tell him that I am not at home. Loo-loo-loo!

All (*with conviction*). Some shock has turned his brine!

Joe (*sitting down on floor, and weaving straws in his hair*). My curse upon him that invented jam. Let us all play Tibbits.

[*Laughs vacantly; all gather round him, shaking their heads, his* Mother *falls fainting at his feet, as Curtain falls upon a strong and moral, though undeniably gloomy dénoûment.*

THE SAVOYARDS.

MESSRS. GILBERT AND SULLIVAN'S *Gondoliers* deserves to rank immediately after *The Mikado* and *Pinafore* bracketed. The *mise-en-scène* is in every way about as perfect as it is possible to be. Every writer of *libretti*, every dramatist and every composer, must envy the Two Savoyards, their rare opportunities of putting their own work on their own stage, and being like the two Kings in this piece, jointly and equally monarchs of all they survey, though, unlike these two potentates, they are not their subjects' servants, and have only to consider what is best for the success of their piece, and to have it carried out, whatever it is, literally regardless of expense. And what does their work amount to? Simply a Two-Act Opera, to play two-hours-and-a-half, for the production of which they have practically a whole year at their disposal. They can go as near commanding success as is given to mortal dramatist and composer, and for any comparative failure they can have no one to blame but themselves, the pair of them.

"Once upon a time there were two Kings."

Whatever the piece may be, it is always a pleasure to see how thoroughly the old hands at the Savoy enter into "the fun of the thing," and, as in the case of Miss JESSIE BOND and Mr. RUTLAND BARRINGTON, absolutely carry the audience with them by sheer exuberance of spirits.

Mr. RUTLAND BARRINGTON possesses a ready wit and keen appreciation of humour; and, as this is true also of Miss JESSIE BOND, the couple, being thoroughly in their element with such parts as *The Gondoliers* provide for them, legitimately graft their own fun on the plentiful stock already supplied by the author, and are literally the life and soul of the piece.

On the night I was there a Miss NORAH PHYLLIS took Miss ULMAR's part of *Gianetta*, and played it, at short notice, admirably. She struck me as bearing a marked facial resemblance to Miss FORTESQUE, and is a decided acquisition. Mr. DENNY, as the Grand Inquisitor (a part that recalls the Lord High Chancellor of the ex-Savoyard, GEORGE GROSSMITH, now entertaining "on his own hook"), doesn't seem to be a born Savoyard, *non nascitur* and *non fit* at present. Good he is, of course, but there's no spontaneity about him. However, for an eccentric comedian merely to do exactly what he is told, and nothing more, yet to do that, little or much, well, is a performance that would meet with *Hamlet's* approbation, and Mr. GILBERT's. Mr. FRANK WYATT, as "the new boy" at the Savoy School, doesn't, as yet, seem quite happy; but it cannot be expected that he should feel "quite at home," when he has only recently arrived at a new school.

Rutland Pooh-Bah-rington, *after* signing his re-engagement, takes his Bond, and sings, "Again we come to the Savoy."

Miss BRANDRAM is a thorough Savoyard; *nihil tetigit quod non ornavit*, and her embroidery of a part which it is fair to suppose was written to suit her, is done in her own quaint and quiet fashion.

A fantastically and humorous peculiarly Gilbertian idea is the comparison between a visit to the dentist's, and an interview with the questioners by the rack, suggested by the Grand Inquisitor Don ALHAMBRA, who says that the nurse is waiting in the torture-chamber, but that there is no hurry for him to go and examine her, as she is all right and "has all the illustrated papers."

There are ever so many good things in the Opera, but the best of all, for genuinely humorous inspiration of words, music and acting, is the quartette in the Second Act, "In a contemplative fashion." It is excellent. Thank goodness, *encores* are discouraged, except where there can be "No possible sort of doubt, No possible doubt whatever" (also a capital song in this piece) as to the unanimity of the enthusiasm. There is nothing in the music that catches the ear on a first hearing as did "*The Three Little Maids*," or "*I've got a Song to Sing O!*" but it is all charming, and the masterly orchestration in its fulness and variety is something that the least technically educated can appreciate and enjoy. The piece is so brilliant to eye and ear, that there is never a dull moment on the stage or off it. It is just one of those simple *Bab-Ballady* stories which, depending for its success not on any startling surprise in the plot, but on general excellence, may, especially on account of the music, be safely put down on the play-goer's list for "a second hearing."

George Grossmith on his own Hook.

CHRISTMAS BOX.

RUSSIAN ART.

FROM *The Morning Post*, last week, we learn that the Russian Imperial Academy of Arts, has passed a law prohibiting Jews to become members of its artistic body. By the Nose of *Mr. Punch*, but this is too bad, and too bigoted for any century, let alone the "so-called Nineteenth." If such a rule, or rather such an exception, could have been possible in England within the last twenty years, what a discouragement it would have been for all the Royal Academicians, who would thereby *have lost Hart!* Dear good old SOLOMON! He was a poor HART that often rejoiced, and if he was not the best painter in the world, he was just about the worst punster. We hope to hear that our Royal Academicians, with their large-hearted and golden-tongued President at their head, will send a friendly expostulation to their Russian Brothers in oil, and obtain the abrogation of this unreasonable legislation, which is one effect of an anti-semitic cyclone, fit only for the *Jew-ventus Mundi*, but not for the world at its maturity.

"DOT AND GO ONE"—no, see *Dot*, and go several times again to see our JOHNNIE TOOLE at his own Theatre, before he leaves for the Antipodes. The good old farce of *Toole in the Pigskin* is well-mounted, and is, of course, one of the pieces on which he will rely, as especially appropriate to Horse-tralia.

FRESH TO THE COUNTRY.

Young Lady. "CAN YOU TELL ME WHERE THE MEET IS?"
Butcher's Boy (a recent importation from London). "YES, MUM. I JIST TOOK IT HUP TO THE 'ALL THIS MORNIN'!"

THE START.

OFF! Yes; but inexperienced feet,
With pace that 's fast and a style that 's neat,
At first can scarcely be expected
O'er frozen waters to glide and fleet.

"*Have them on, Sir?*" Old Time was there,
With the shining steels and the ready chair.
His latest pupil is passing yonder,
No more the ice-locked waters to dare.

His feet are tired and his knees are stiff,
His breath comes low in a wheezy whiff.
He 'll now "lay up," like a worn-out wherry.
'Tis yours to start like a new-launched skiff.

How many a novice that Skate-man old
Has helped to onset alert and bold!
How many a veteran worn seen vanish,
Aching with effort and pinched with cold!

And you, young novice, 'tis now your turn
Your skates to try and your steps to learn.
You long to fly like the skimming swallow,
To brave the breathless "scurry" you burn.

He knows, he knows, your aged guide!
The screws are fixed, and the straps are tied,
And he looks sharp out for the shambling stagger,
The elbows wobbling, the knees too wide.

But boyhood 's hopeful, and youth has pluck;
And now, when scarcely your steel hath struck
The slithery ice in your first bold venture,
Punch, friendly watcher, will wish you luck!

He too has seen some novices start,
And knows, however you play your part,
The "outside edge," and attendant perils,
Will tax your sinews and test your heart.

But most on the ice does the old saw hold—
"Be bold, be bold, but be not *too* bold!"
Though there 's many a rotten patch marked "Danger!"
Young hearts are warm if the weather be cold.

Bravo, youngster! Steady! Strike out!
Caution, yes, but not palsying doubt.
Courage! and you—ere your course you finish—
May beat "Fish" SMART at a flying bout!

ROBERT'S KRISMUS HIM.

How werry warious is the reasons why
We welcoms Crismus with a ringing cheer!
The Skoolboy nos his hollidays is nigh,
And treats the hale stout Porter to sum Beer.

The Cook and Ousemaid smiles upon the Baker,
Who takes his little fee without no blush,
Likewise upon the Butcher and Shoo Maker
Who makes their calls dispite the Sno or Slush.

The Dustman cums a crying out for "Dust,"
But nos full well that isn't wot he seeks,
And gits his well-earned shilling with the fust,
And smiles on Mary as his thanks he speaks.

The Groser smart, as likewise his Green Brother,
In their best close cums with a modest ring,
And having got their orders, one and tother,
Smilingly asks for jest one other thing.

The Postman's dubbel nock cums to each door,
Whether he has a Letter got or no,
The stingy Master thinks his call a bore,
And gives his paltry shilling werry slow.

The jowial Waiter shows unwonted joy!
And hails his Crismus with becoming glee!
Knowing full well *his* plezzurs newer cloy,
Who gets from ewery Gest a dubble fee!

Why are not all men like the jowial Waiter,
Allers content with what kind Fortune brings,
Whether it 's Turtel Soop or a meer tater,
He sets a pattern to Lord Mares and Kings.

Then let us all while Crismus time we 're keeping,
Whether we barsks in fortune's smile or frown,
Be thankful for the harwest we are reaping,
And give a thort to them whose luck is down.

ROBERT.

HISTORICAL PARALLELS.—Two Directories. The French *Directoire* was a short-lived stop-gap of not unmixed benefit to France, but our English Directory, yclept KELLY'S, for 1890, directorily, or indirectorily, supplies all our wants, comes always "as a boon and a blessing to men," and is within a decade of becoming a hale and hearty centenarian. *Vivat* KELLY!

THE START.

UNTILED; OR, THE MODERN ASMODEUS.

"Très volontiers," repartit le démon. "Vous aimez les tableaux changeans; je veux vous contenter."
Le Diable Boiteux.

XV.

Down through the night we drifted slow, the rays
From London's countless gas-jets starred the haze
O'er which we darkly hovered.
Broad loomed the bulk of WREN's colossal dome
Through the grey mist, which, like a sea of foam,
The sleeping city covered.

"The year," the Shadow murmured, "nears its close.
Lo! how they swarm in slumber, friends and foes,
Kindred and utter strangers,
The millions of this Babylon, stretched beneath
The shroud of night, and drawing peaceful breath,
Unstirred by dreads and dangers."

"But not by dreams," I answered. "Canst [and steal
reveal,
O Shade, the vagrant thoughts that throng
About these countless pillows?
Or are these sleeping souls as shut to thee
As is the unsounded silence of the sea
To those who brave its billows?"

"Dreams?" smiled the Shadow. "What I see right well
Your eyes may not behold. Yet can I tell
Their import as unravelled
By subtler sense, whilst through these souls they pass!
What said the demon to *Don Cléophas*
As o'er Madrid they travelled?

"Such dreams as haunt us near the glimmering morn
Shadow forth truth; these through the Gates of Horn
Find passage to the sleeper. [read
Prophetic? Nay! But sense therein may
The heart's desire, in pangs of love or greed;
What divination deeper?

"Yon Statesman, struggling in the night-mare's grip,
Fears he has let Time's scanty forelock slip,
And lost a great occasion [a-writhe
Of self-advancement. How that mouth 's
With hate, on platforms oft so blandly blithe
In golden-tongued persuasion!

"He, blindly blundering, as through baffling mist,
Is a professional philanthropist,
Rosy-gilled, genial, hearty. [deep
A mouthing Friend of Man. He dreams he's
In jungles of self-interest, where creep
Sleuth-hounds of creed and party.

"That sleek-browed sleeper? 'Tis the Great Pooh-pooh,
The 'Mugwump' of the *Weekly Whillaloo*,
A most superior creature;
Too high for pity and too cold for wrath;
The pride of dawdlers on the Higher Path
Suffuses every feature.

"Contemptuous, he, of clamorous party strife,
And all the hot activities of life;
But most the Politician
He mocks—for 'meanness.' How the prig would gasp
If shown the slime-trail of that wriggling asp
In his own haunts Elysian!

"He dreams Creation, cleared of vulgar noise,
Is dedicate to calm æsthetic joys,
That he is limply lolling
Amidst the lilies that toil not nor spin,
Given quite to dandy scorn, and dainty sin,
And languor, and 'log-rolling.'

"The head which on that lace-trimmed pillow lies [eyes
Is fair as Psyche's. Yes, those snow-veiled
Look Dian-pure and saintly.
Sure no Aholibah could own those lips,
Through whose soft lusciousness the bland breath slips
So fragrantly and faintly.

"That up-curved arm which bears the silken knot
Of dusky hair, is it more free from blot
Than is her soul who slumbers?
Her visions? Of 'desirable young men,'
Who crowd round her like swine round Circe's pen
In ever-swelling numbers.

"Of Love? Nay, but of lovers. Love's a lean
And impecunious urchin; lovers mean
Gifts, worship, triumph—Money!
The Golden Apple is the fruit to witch
Our modern Atalantas. To be rich,
Live on life's milk and honey;

"Stir crowds, charm royalties,—these are the things
Psyche most cares for, not her radiant wings
Or Cupid's shy caresses.
She dreams of conquests that a world applauds,
Or a Stage-wardrobe with a thousand gauds,
And half-a-hundred dresses.

"Not so, that other sleeper, stretched at length, [strength,
A spectre stripped of charm and shorn of
In yon dismantled chamber.
Dreams she of girlhood's couch, the lavender
Of country sheets, a roof where pigeons whirr
And creamy roses clamber?

"Of him the red-faced swain whose rounded eyes
Dwelt on her charms in moony ecstacies?
Of pride, of shame, of sorrow?
Nay, of what now seems Nature's crowning good; [food—food.
Hunger-wrought dreams are hers of food—
She'll wake from them to-morrow;

"Wake fiercely famishing, savagely sick,
The animal in man is quick, so quick
To stir and claim full forage.
Let famine parch the hero's pallid lips,
Pinch Beauty's breast, then watch the swift eclipse
Of virtue, sweetness, courage!

"Cynical? Sense leaves that to callow youth
And callous age; plain picturing of the truth
Seems cynical,—to folly.
Friend, the true cynic is the shallow mime
Who paints humanity devoid of crime,
And life supremely 'jolly.'

"See such an one, in scented sheets a-loll!
Rich fare and rosy wine have lapped his soul
In a *bon-vivant's* slumbers.
His pen lies there, the ink is scarcely dry
With which he sketched the smug philosophy
Of Cant and Christmas Numbers.

"He dreams of—holly, home, exuberant hearts,
Picturesque poverty, the toys and tarts
Of childhood's hope?—No, verily!
'Tis a dream-world of pleasure, power, and pelf,
Visions of the apocalypse of Self,
O'er which his soul laughs merrily."

"Enough!" I cried. "The morning's earliest gleams
Will soon dissolve this pageantry of dreams.
The New Year's at our portals.
Unselfishness, and purity, and hope,
Dawn with it through the dream-world's cloudy cope,
Even on slumbering mortals."

"Granted," the Shadow answered. "Poppy-Land
Is not *all* Appetite and Humbug bland.
Myriads of night-capped noddles
We must leave unexplored. Their owners oft
Are saints austere, or sympathisers soft,
Truth's types and Virtue's models!"

(*To be continued.*)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

PREPARING TO MEET AN EPIDEMIC.—If you sit all day in your great coat, muffled up to the eyes in a woollen comforter and with your feet in constantly replenished mustard and hot water, as you propose, you will certainly be prepared, when it makes its appearance, to encounter the attack of the Russian Epidemic Influenza, that you so much dread. Your idea of taking a dose of some advertised Patent Medicine every other hour, as a preventive, is by no means a bad one, and your resolution to shut yourself up in your house, see no friends, open no letters, read no newspapers, and live entirely on tinned meats for three months, might possibly secure you from the chances of an attack; but on the whole we should rather advise you to carry out your plan of leaving the country altogether and seeking a temporary asylum in South Central Africa until you are assured that the contagion has blown over, as the preferable one. Anyhow you might try it. Meanwhile, certainly drench your clothes with disinfectants, fill your hat with cotton wool steeped in spirits of camphor, and if you meet any friends in the street, prevent them addressing you, by keeping them at arm's-length with your walking-stick, or, better still, if you have it with you, your opened umbrella. They may or they may not understand your motive, and when they do, though they may not respect you for your conduct, it is just possible that they may not seriously resent it. Your precautionary measures, if scrupulously carried out, should certainly ensure your safety. Put them in hand at once, and be sure you let us hear from you next Spring informing us, on the whole, how you have got on.

WHAT POCKET-BOOKS TO GET.—Mark us; WARD'S.

HUNTING HINTS.—HOW TO KEEP THE THING GOING DURING A SNOW.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

THE BARON'S Booking-Office is still decked about with holly,
For the Season that at any rate's conventionally "jolly,"
Is by no means wholly over, and the very hard-worked Baron
Feels rather like a sort of tired-out literary Charon,
With an over-laden ferry-boat, and passengers too numerous.
For seasonable "novelties"—and "notions" quaint and humorous
Still crowd on him, and claim his constant critical attention,
Some may escape his notice, but a few more he must mention
MARCUS WARD's are good as usual, and his "Christmas Cheque Book"'s [funny;
Though rather a sardonic "sell" to parties short of money.
CASSELL BROTHERS' Cards are charming, but the words "Printed in Germany,"
The patriotic Baron irk, or may he turn a Merman! He
Can't see why pictured prettiness should be beyond *home*-printing.
He doesn't want to dogmatise, but really can't help *hinting!*
Scout's Head, by LANGBRIDGE, boys will like. JEROME K. JEROME's *Stage-Land*, [land
Which BERNARD PARTRIDGE illustrates, might tickle e'en the sage
Of Puritan Philistia at Clapham-Rise or Barnsbury.
And now let us the memory of Christmas Cards and yarns bury
In a right bowl of stingo, in the which the Baron cheerily
Drinks to his readers heartily, sincerely, and Happy-New-Year-ily!

Once upon a time Mr. LEWIS CARROLL wrote a marvellously grotesque, fantastic, and humorous book called *Alice in Wonderland*, and on another occasion he wrote *Through the Looking-Glass*, in which *Alice* reappeared, and then the spring of Mr. LEWIS CARROLL's fanciful humour apparently dried up, for he has done nothing since worth mentioning in the same breath with his two first works; and if his writings have been by comparison watery, unlike water, they have never risen by inherent quality to their original level. Of his latest book, called *Sylvie and Bruno*, I can make neither head nor tale. It seems a muddle of all sorts, including a little bit of Bible thrown in. It will be bought, because LEWIS CARROLL's name is to it, and it will be enjoyed for the sake of Mr. FURNISS's excellent illustrations, but for no other reason, that I can see. I feel inclined to carol to CARROLL, "O don't you remember sweet ALICE?" and, if so, please be good enough to wake her up again, if you can.

M. FRÉDERIC MAYER's International Almanack takes my breath away. It is overwhelmingly international. Most useful to the International Theatre-goer, as there are plans of all the principal theatres in Europe, with the seats numbered, so that you have only to wire (answer paid) to the Théâtre Français for *fauteuil d'orchestre* Number 20, to Drury Lane in the same way, to the Operahaus, Berlin ("Open Haus" sounds so internationally hospitable) for *Parquet* Number 200 (so as to get a good view), to the Wallner Theater, Berlin, for something of the same sort, or to La Scala, Milan, for the sixth *Sedie d'orchestra* on the left (as the numbers are not given—why?) and you'll be accommodated. Then with ease the internationalist can learn when the Moon is full, *Pleine Lune*, *Vollmond*, *Luna Piena* and *Luna Ilena* in five languages. The Italian, the Spaniard, the French, the Englishman, the German and the Dutchman can find out all about the different watering-places of Europe, each one in his own native tongue, and all about "the Court of Arches" in London and Madrid. There is the Jewish and also the Mahommedan Calendar, but I see nothing about the Greek Kalends. I am not quite sure that the Bulgarians will be quite satisfied, and I should say, that the Aborigines of Central Africa will have a distinct grievance, which M. FRÉDERIC MAYER will rectify after an interview with Mr. STANLEY. It's a wonderful production, and as it gives postal rates and cab-fares in ever so many languages, it will be of great practical value to the traveller. But no list of cab-fares is perfect without a model row with the driver in eight languages, including some bad language and directions as to the shortest route to the nearest police court.

Our good Doctor ROOSE *in urbe*, has just published a *brochure*, dealing with the origin, treatment, and prevention (for there is apparently no cure) of the fell disease to which, and for a multitude of whose victims, Father DAMIEN died a martyr. If in the Doctor's treatment of this subject after his own peculiar fashion *à la* ROOSE, he can help to alleviate present suffering and materially assist the crusade now being undertaken against this common enemy, he will have contributed his share of energy in starting 1890 hopefully.

Those who suffer from indigestion at this festive season, and wish to intensify the effects of the malady, will do well to read a new book entitled *Master of his Fate*, by J. MACLAREN COBBAN, who, if he does not write well, that is, judging his style from a hypercritical purist's point of view, yet contrives to interest you with a story almost as sensational as that of *Hyde and Jekyl*. The *Master of his Fate* might have had for its second title, *Or, The Accomplished Modern Vampire*, the hero being a sort of a vampire, but not one of the good old school.

BARON DE ROOK-WORMS & Co.

"THE SERVANTS."

Lady Patroness (Registry Office of Charitable Society). "AND WHY ARE YOU LEAVING YOUR PRESENT PLACE?"
Small Applicant. "'PLEASE, 'M, THE LADY SAID SHE CAN DO WITH A LESS EXPERIENCED SERVANT!"

AMONG THE AMATEURS.

No. II.—PREPARATION.

SCENE.—*The Theatre of the provincial town of Blankbury. A company of Amateurs, the "Thespian Wanderers," are rehearsing the well-known Comedy of "Heads or Tails?" Amongst them are our friends* BUCKSTONE BOLDERO, TIFFINGTON SPINKS, CHARLIE GUSHBY, *and* HARRY HALL. *Besides these, we may note* Colonel THOMAS CLUMK, *an ex-military Amateur, who devotes more time to acting small parts and talking big about them than he ever did to soldiering. Then there is* ANDREW JARP, *a portly and elderly partner in a considerable firm of Solicitors, and an actor who, by long practice, has grown perfect in the part of a Family Butler. His office is in the City, and he drives down to it every morning in a private brougham, fitted with a looking-glass, by the help of which he studies the air and deportment characteristic of a modern Seneschal. He is a man of few words, off as well as on the stage; but his eyes flash fury if he hears his favourite Art derided by the scoffer.* HORATIO SPUFFIL *is also in the cast. He has dabbled in literature, but has lately abandoned such frivolity, and been elected a Member of the London County Council. A few rising Amateur Supers complete the male portion of the cast. The Ladies' parts are played by professional Actresses, of the Theatres Royal generally, who happen to be, as they pleasantly express it in their advertisements in the "Era," "resting"*—Miss DOROTHY SHUTTLE, Miss AMELIA SLIMPER, *who are new to the Amateurs,* and KITTY LARKINGS, *who has "assisted" the "Thespian Wanderers" before.* BOLDERO *is Stage Manager. The Stage is occupied by* SPINKS (*as* Colonel DEBENHAM, *a retired Indian Officer*), GUSHBY (*as* TOM TILBURY, *a comic Country Squire*), *and* DOROTHY SHUTTLE (*as* BELINDA, *Nurserymaid in the family of* Lord *and* Lady SHORTHORN, *represented respectively by* BOLDERO *and* Miss AMELIA).

Boldero (from the front of the house). Stop a moment! You know we really must settle what we are to do about those two children that *Belinda's* got to wheel on in the double perambulator. I asked the Duchess of MIDDLESEX to lend us her twins for a couple of nights, but she writes to say they've just got the measles. Isn't there any one here who can help us? [*The three Ladies titter.*

Gushby (in whose breast the leading part played by SPINKS *still rankles).* Why not let SPINKS do it? He's always wanting to "double" parts, and here's a splendid chance for him.

Spinks (coldly). That's *very* funny—really *very* funny, GUSHBY. It's a pity "Colonel DEBENHAM" (*alluding to his own rôle in the comedy*) isn't a *clown's* part. I'd give it up to you right off, if it was. Ha, ha! (*bitterly*).

Colonel Clumk. There's a man in my old regiment who's got two red-haired brats; but he wants ten shillings a night for 'em.

Boldero. That's pretty stiff. However, I'll inspect them to-morrow. Let's get on a bit now. Come, SPINKS!

Spinks. Where were we? (*With an air of intense annoyance.*) These constant interruptions put one off so. Oh, yes, I remember. (*Resumes rehearsing the part of* "Colonel DEBENHAM.") "Nursemaid, take those squalling infants away. I'm surprised at Lady SHORTHORN permitting them in the drawing-room. Wheel them away at once—at once, I say; or I'll make curry-powder of the lot of you!"

Miss Dorothy Shuttle (as "BELINDA"). "Well, I'm sure; I never was so spoken to afore. (*To her imaginary children.*) Did the horrid man scold them, then, pretty dears? (*To* DEBENHAM.) You a Colonel? You ain't fit to be a General in the Salvation Army. Impertinence!" [*Exit, wheeling an imaginary perambulator.*

Boldero (enthusiastically). Excellent! That couldn't have been done better. When we get the perambulator and the babies, it's bound to go. (Miss DOROTHY SHUTTLE *is much pleased, and foresees several stalls being taken on the occasion of her next benefit.*) Now, then (*to* SPINKS, *who thinks it a mistake that a Stage Manager should stop to praise anybody, with one exception, of course, at rehearsal*), SPINKS, hurry up a bit, hurry up!

Spinks. My dear BOLDERO, I'm perfectly ready to begin as soon as ever the talking stops. I know my cues, I fancy; but it's quite hopeless to get on if *everybody* wants to talk at the same moment. (*Resumes his part as* "Colonel DEBENHAM," *shaking his fist at the departing* BELINDA.) "Impertinent minx! (*Turns furiously on* GUSHBY, *who is on the stage in the character of* TILBURY, *the comic*

Squire.) And you, Sir, what in the name of fifty thousand jackasses, do you mean by standing there grinning from ear to ear like a buck nigger? But I'll not stand it any longer, Sir, not for a moment. D'ye hear, you miserable turnip-faced bumpkin, d'ye hear?" (*Carried away by histrionic enthusiasm,* SPINKS *brings his fist down violently on the precise spot where a table ought to be, but is not, standing. As a natural result, he hits himself with much force on his leg. The others laugh, and the Ladies turn away giggling, feeling that they ought to be sympathetic. The unfortunate* SPINKS *hurts himself considerably, and is furious. Coming, as it were, right out of the part, and being temporarily himself again, only in a rage, he addresses the Stage Manager.*) Upon my soul, BOLDERO, this is perfectly infamous. How often have I begged you to get that table placed there *at all costs*, and time after time you forget it. I know what it is; you want to make me ridiculous. But you'll be d—— (*suddenly remembers that ladies are present, and substitutes a milder expletive*)—confoundedly sorry for yourself when you find I'm too lame to act, and the whole of your precious piece will be ruined. You'll none of you get notices worth twopence from the critics. [*Limps up and down the Stage.*

Miss Amelia Slimper (*rather a novice, and anxious to make useful acquaintances among the distinguished Amateurs—to* Miss KITTY, *whispering*). Are they very keen about notices?

Miss Kitty (*experienced in Amateurs*). Keen! I should think they were. They talk about nothing else when it's over.

Boldero (*peaceably*). Well, SPINKS, you know you smashed two tables last week, and I thought we agreed to rehearse without one. But I'll see it's there next time. Now then, JARP! Where's JARP? This is his entrance. Where the deuce is he? (*Enter* JARP *as* "Mr. BINNS, *Butler to* Lord SHORTHORN"). Dear me, JARP, what have you been up to?

Jarp (*vexed*). What have I been up to? I'll tell you. I've been learning my part, and it would be a good thing if everybody were to follow my example, instead of talking all day.

Boldero. JARP, don't be sarcastic. It doesn't suit you. Let's see if you know your part, after all this.

JARP (*as* BINNS, *without moving a muscle*). "'Er Ladyship's compliments, Colonel DEBENHAM, and she would like to see you."

Spinks (*as* DEBENHAM). "Very well. Tell her I'll come."

Jarp (*as* BINNS). "Yes, Sir."

[*Exit* JARP *as* BINNS, *but immediately becomes* JARP, *and complains to the young Ladies that these fellows never will rehearse properly. The professional Ladies sympathise with him, and admit that it is very provoking, and* Miss AMELIA *takes the opportunity of expressing her confident opinion that he,* JARP, *will play his part admirably, and only wonders that he hasn't got more to do. Then somehow the conversation wanders towards professional matters, and the probability of* Miss AMELIA *being engaged next season at a fashionable London Theatre, &c., &c.*

Miss Dorothy (*aside, in a whisper, to* Miss KITTY, *alluding to* JARP'S *recent exit*). Is that all he's got to say?

Miss Kitty (*in same tone to* Miss DOROTHY). Not quite. He says, "'Er Ladyship is served!" in the next Act. A part like that takes a deal of learning.

[*The rehearsal proceeds.* SPUFFIL *does wonders as "a young man about town"; Colonel* CLUMP *performs the part of a Country Clergyman in a manner suggestive rather of a Drill-sergeant than a Vicar.* BOLDERO *having praised* SPINKS, *is pronounced by the latter to be unapproachable as* Lord SHORTHORN. *In the Third Act,* HALL *sings his song about "the Boy in Buttons." On the previous day, he had had a difference with* SPINKS *and* BOLDERO.

Boldero. I think that song's out of place. What say you, SPINKS?

Spinks. Well, it does sound just a trifle vulgar.

Boldero. Yes. I think we shall have to cut it, HALL. It'll do for next year just as well. You can make it fit any piece?

Hall (*pale, but determined*). If that song goes, I go too. Oh, yes, SPINKS, it's all very well for you to be so blessed polite to BOLDERO, but you didn't seem to think much of his acting (*observes* SPUFFIL *smiling*) no, nor of SPUFFIL'S either, when you spoke to me yesterday: and as for GUSHBY, why we all know what GUSHBY is.

[*All join in the fight, which continues for ten minutes.*

Boldero (*looking at his watch*). Good heavens! we shall miss our train, and I've promised to look in on IRVING to-night. He'd never forgive me if I didn't turn up.

[*Smiles of quiet intelligence appear on the faces of the other Amateurs, accompanied with a few winks, which like "laughter in Court," are "immediately suppressed." Exeunt omnes, severally, each pleased with himself, and more or less disgusted with everybody else.*

Miss Amelia (*to* KITTY). What a funny lot! Are they like that every year?

Miss Kitty. Yes, always. But (*confidentially*) they do come out strong for a "ben."

[*They retire to their lodgings for a little quiet tea and a rest.*

A MID-WINTER'S NIGHT'S DREAM.

SURELY AUGUSTUS DRURIOLANUS has triumphed and beaten the record! For the last nine years it has been the cry, "There never was so good a Pantomime as *this* one," and now again the shout is repeated. *Jack and the Beanstalk* is the eleventh of the series, and the best, "How it is done?" only AUGUSTUS can answer. The Annual (no longer, alas! written by the gentle and genial E. L. B.) has an excellent book. It contains something of all sorts. Now we have SHAKSPEARE'S fairy-land with *Oberon*, *Titania*, and *Puck*, then HARRY NICHOLL'S Royal Palace with Mr. HERBERT CAMPBELL and Miss HARRIET VERNON, then Madame KATTI LANNER'S Market Place, with a number of the most promising of her pupils (of all ages too, from the tiny child to the "ceased-growing-a-long-while-ago") then Mrs. SIMPSON'S Back Garden, with Mr. GEORGE CONQUEST junior as a giant, Mr. DAN LENO as a widow, and the Brothers GRIFFITHS as the Cow Company Limited, and lastly, controlling the whole, we have Mr. AUGUSTUS HARRIS who is seen at his very best when we reach the Giant's Library and the realms of Olympus.

And this Pantomime is not only beautiful but amusing. It has two grand processions, but this year, by good stage-management, neither is tedious. The Shakspearean Heroines do a little play-acting between whiles, and the gods and goddesses, or rather their attendants, manœuvre before the eye becomes weary of watching their approach. For instance, Mars has scarcely time to swagger down to the foot-lights in the most appropriate and approved fashion, before he finds himself called upon to stand near a private box on the prompt side, to be well out of the way of his dancing terpsichorean satellites. *Lady Macbeth* has hardly "taken the daggers" before *King Lear* (Mr. LORRAINE) is bringing a furtive tear to the eyes of all beholders (*one* tear is sufficient at Christmastide) by his touching pantomime in the presence of his three fair daughters.

Then, too, Mr. HARRY PAYNE has *his* chance, and makes the most of it. It was quite pleasant to see the Clown on Boxing-Night, and those who left the theatre mindful of trains that will not delay the hours fixed for their departure, must have determined (if they were wise people) to come again to witness the remainder of the performances. Then those who liked acrobats had the Leopold Troupe, and a strong man who lifted up a horse (but did not have his own name, or the name of his charger, on the programme) to delight them. And it was also a pleasing reflection to remember that the entertainment was the result of solid hard work, combined with excellent judgment and taste. Paterfamilias could say to Young Hopeful home for the holidays, "See here, my lad, the lessee of our National Theatre could never have caused us so much thorough enjoyment had he not worked with a will that you will do well to imitate when you return to Dr. SWISHTALES' Academy at the conclusion of the Christmas vacation." And so all can cry with genuine enthusiasm:—"*Ave*, AUGUSTUS! *Ave*, DRURIOLANUS! *Ave*, IMPERATOR! *Ave! Ave!*—and NICHOLLS."

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HEALTHY REFLECTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR.

THE HUMBLE WEED.

How in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—But if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

NOBILITY OF LIFE.

Cease every joy to glimmer on my mind;
But leave, oh! leave the light of hope behind.

THIS IS NOT THY HOME.
CHAUCER.

THE VALUE OF TO-DAY.

"So here hath been dawning
Another blue day;
Think, wilt thou let it
Slip useless away?

Out of eternity
This new day is born,
Into eternity
At night doth return.

Behold it aforetime
No eyes ever did
So soon it for ever
From all eyes is hid.

Here hath been dawning
Another blue day;
Think, wilt thou let it
Slip useless away."
T. CARLYLE.

What higher aim can man attain,
Than conquest over human pain?

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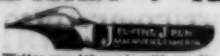

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